

REMARKS

Claims 1 – 18 are pending in the application. Claims 13 – 18 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1 – 12 have been rejected.

Applicants affirm their election of Group I., claims 1 – 12, drawn to a method for scheduling work and delivery of material for mass-producing items in a factory, classified in class 705, subclass 28.

Claims 1 – 12 stand rejected under Noori, Production and Operations Management, McGraw-Hill, Inc. (1995), pp 422-601. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention, as set forth by independent claim 1, relates to a method for scheduling work and delivery of material for mass-producing items in a factory. The method includes obtaining at least one outstanding customer order, determining a current state of an available inventory of at least one material from a plurality of material sources, and periodically generating a work schedule and a material delivery schedule for producing the item using the at least one outstanding customer order and the current state of the available inventory. Each outstanding customer of the at least one outstanding customer order includes an item ordered by a customer, and producing the item requires a required quantity of a required material. The determining the current state of the available inventory is performed such that the determining the current state of the available inventory is completed immediately prior to the generating the work schedule and the material delivery schedule. The obtaining the at least one outstanding customer order is performed such that the obtaining the customer order is completed immediately prior to the generating the work schedule and the material delivery schedule.

Noori includes a plurality of chapters relating to various aspects of production and operations management. For example, Noori, Chapter 13 is titled “Managing Inventories: Independent Demand Systems”, Noori, Chapter 14 is titled “Aggregate Planning”, Noori, Chapter 15 is titled “Material Requirements Planning”, Noori, Chapter 16 is titled “Just-In-Time and Synchronous Operations”, and Noori, Chapter 17 is titled “Upstream-Downstream Materials Management”.

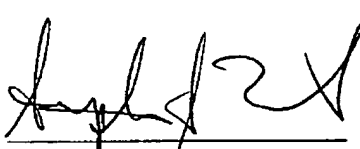
Noori does not teach or suggest a method for scheduling work and delivery of material for mass-producing items in a factory where such a method includes obtaining at least one outstanding customer order, determining a current state of an available inventory of at least one material from a plurality of material sources, and periodically generating a work schedule and a material delivery schedule for producing the item using the at least one outstanding customer order and the current state of the available inventory. Much less such a method in which each outstanding customer of the at least one outstanding customer order includes an item ordered by a customer, and producing the item requires a required quantity of a required material, the determining the current state of the available inventory is performed such that the determining the current state of the available inventory is completed immediately prior to the generating the work schedule and the material delivery schedule, and the obtaining the at least one outstanding customer order is performed such that the obtaining the customer order is completed immediately prior to the generating the work schedule and the material delivery schedule, all as required by independent claim 1. Claims 2 – 11 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least this reason.

Additionally, the Examiner has cited and generally relied upon over 170 pages of a complex text without providing reference to the particular part of the text upon which the Examiner specifically relied. Additionally, the use of the reference with respect to each rejected claim has not been clearly specified. Applicants respectfully request reference to the particular part of the reference upon which the Examiner has relied for each rejected claim as required by 37 C.F.R. § 1.104(c)(2).

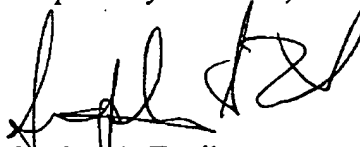
Additionally, the Examiner has generally stated that “[a]ll other claimed limitations are either disclosed or inherent.” Applicants respectfully request that for any limitations that are not specifically disclosed by Noori, the Examiner provide a specific rationale or evidence tending to show inherency. The fact that a certain result or characteristic may occur or be present in the prior art is not sufficient to establish inherency of that result or characteristic. M.P.E.P. § 2112.01.

CONCLUSION

The claims have been amended to improve clarity. In view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is sent via facsimile on September 17, 2003.	
	<u>9/17/03</u>
Attorney for Applicant(s)	Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,


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